(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of cases relating to import of plant products cleared since June, 1991?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b). Yes Sir. With effect from 20th January, 1992, the Government has relaxed the requirement of Import Permit for the consignments of plant and plant materials imported for consumption purposes and the requirement of Import Permit, Phytosanitary Certificate for the consignments of plant/plant materials imported as an accompanied baggage and through international postal channel have also ben relaxed without compromising with the plant quarantine procedures.

(c) A total number of 9,755 cases (consignments) of plants and plant products have been cleared after the required quarantine screening upto 31st january, 1992.

[*English*]

Deficit in Oil Industry Pool Accounts

2732. SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:

Will the Minister of PERTOLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cumulative deficit in oil Industry Pool Accounts has gone to thousands crores of rupees;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the remedial measures being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) (a) to (d). Oil Pool Account has incurred sizable deficits from 1989-90, mainly on account of sales realisations not fully covering the costs incurred. The situation is being monitored continuously.

Boycott of Elections by Political parties in Punjab

2733. SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT:
SHRI RABI RAY;
SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some political parties boycotted the elections held in Punjab recently;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the parties which boycotted the elections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) and (b). Some political parties boycotted elections held in punjab recently, possibly under pressure from militants.

(c) While national parties like Congress-I. BJP, CPI, CPI (M) and Janta Dal as well as Shiromani Akali Dal (Kalul) participated in the elections. SAD (Mann), SAD (Badal), SAD (Roade-Baba) and ASSIF (Manjit) boycotted the elections.

Return of Indians to Kuwait

2734. SHRI KODIKKUNIL SURESH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians who have returned to Kuwait so far;

(b) the number of Indians working in Kuwait at present; and

(c) the facilities provided by the government for the return of Indians to Kuwait?